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March 22, 1957

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
c/o Ciba Foundation
41 Portland Place
London W. 1, England

Dear Joshua:

As I told you, I sent George Beadle that part of an earlier letter of yours in which you outlined "the merits of a rather weighty appendix", to ask for his commentary. Beets asked one of his confreres, Joe Bertani. Given herewith are, first, Beets' brief note and, second, Bertani's:

"I asked Joe Bertani's opinion. He's our highest authority on the subject and here's his answer. I think he has pretty good judgment. I can't suggest any items. First, I probably couldn't anyway but, second, without knowing what he plans for the first part, this is pretty difficult to judge. I guess Bertani has no suggestions either."

"I'd include item 4, and omit items 1 and 2. (I never read Griffith's paper, and it is possibly true that it is hard to find in an average biological library, but not, I'd guess, in any medical library. The papers under 2. are readily available.) As to 3 (Methods), I doubt if the publishers of the first paper (a section in Methods in Medical Research, Vol. 3) will give permission to reprint it. The paper however is useful. As to the second paper on methods (I guess it is the one on the "replica plating" technique) it could easily be summarized in one page."

- Item 1 - Griffith, F. 1928 The significance of pneumococcal types. Journal of Hygiene, 27: 113-159.
2 - The primary announcements of sexual crossing.
3 - The two papers on methods.
4 - About 10 pages of explicit laboratory exercises.

If I may add my two cents' worth, I subscribe to the idea of including laboratory exercises. As to the papers on methods: If the publisher will not permit you to reprint, Bertani saying it is useful, I suggest that Bertani may have the answer--restate in summarized form the gist of these papers (ideas are not subject to copyright--only the expression of the ideas is). As to the first items you mention, despite Bertani's comments, I would go along with you if you decide to include them--or a précis of them.

I might as well take this opportunity to add a suggestion

Dr. Lederberg

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made to me by one of your admirers, who is both a topflight scholar and a person with good sense. This man tells me that he has heard a good deal of objection to your exposition, based, he estimates, on a propensity you have for coining terms with unnecessary abandon, so that even he agrees that at times this habit annoys and distracts the reader. He suggests that, while he will continue to admire your work regardless of what you do about this, he hopes that you will constrain yourself in this respect./

As ever,

Bill

WHF:mc